

Politics

Who we are, How we Vote and
How'd we get there?

Culture, Ideology, Socialization
and Parties

Political Culture-

“A distinctive and patterned way of thinking about how political and economic life ought to be carried out”

We as a country believe...

Generally Accepted Beliefs

- Freedom
 - Right to Practice our religion as we want
 - Right to choose where we live
 - Right to choose our job
 - Right to choose our spouse
- Liberty
 - Ability to rise through the ranks, cross social boundaries
 - Right to Speak our views
 - Right to be free of unwarranted Govt. Intrusion
- Equality
 - Equality of opportunity
 - Equality of treatment under the law
 - No one is above the law, no one is below the law
- Democracy
 - Right to Vote
 - Majority Rule
- Civic Duty
 - Obligation to take part in civic affairs

America v. Rest of the World

- How we think differently
 - Individual Freedom
 - Less willing to accept govt. interference with the economy
 - You earn what you earn!
 - Little Class consciousness
 - Civic Duty
 - Religion- Belief in God
- Can Do Spirit...American Individualism
 - Less Deferential to Authority (like you need to know that)

American “Can Do” Spirit and Economic Equality

- Economic Opportunity rather than Economic Equality is the key
- Personal responsibility and individualism
 - Self Reliance- Climb the ladder- “My grandparents came off the boat and they made it so...”
- Protestant Work ethic and Capitalism (theory by German sociologist, Max Weber).
 - Puritan hard work and capitalism go hand in hand (not as widely accepted as at one time)
- Help those...if they are *truly* needy

Religion and America

- No State Religion
 - Ironically may have led the US to be the most religiously Developed Country
 - At least 2 if not 3 to 4 Great Awakenings in US history have helped shape US politics
 - Much higher church attendance than other developed countries
 - American's are
 - Less likely to vote for an atheist
 - Less likely to accept the theory of evolution and more likely to be creationists (appr. 45% firmly believe in Creationism, appr. 25% firmly believe in evolution)
 - More likely to believe that there is a God
 - Attend Church (often the claim is much more than the reality)
 - Opportunity for cleavages- variety of religious affiliations give a wide range of policies and politics
 - A la “de Tocqueville”, another opportunity for civic activity and awareness

Efficacy and Civic Competence

- Internal
 - Can I understand what's going on and therefore am I capable of making an informative decision on who to vote for.
- External
 - Can I effect what's going on, in other words can I fight city hall.
 - May explain the downward trend in voting over the past 60 years-

Trust in Govt.

- Most Americans trust their own specific politicians but trust in the institutions of Govt. has waned
 - Trust in Govt. has declined since 1970s (blip after 9/11)
 - Peak years for trust were 1932-1964
 - Factors for decline
 - Washington Scandals *Watergate*, Abscam, Iran-Contra, Check Scandal, Monicagate, Abramoff- Delay
 - Active Oppositional press
 - Vietnam War
 - Failures in Govt. Intervention- High Crime Rates, Poverty etc...
 - Transparency??? Making sausage is pretty unappetizing

A More Tolerant Society

- Over the Past 60 years America has become a more tolerant society
 - Factors
 - Civil Rights Movement, - Race, Gender, Disabilities, Homosexual. Intervention by the State to end Discrimination.
 - Americans are more accepting of a multitude of lifestyles and a variety of religions and ethnicities
 - Courts have played a dominant role- (Equal Protection Clause, First Amendment interpretations)

Culture Wars???

- Progressive v. Orthodox ---loaded words
 - Progressive- Move forward, expand rights, be more tolerant and accepting of alternative lifestyles
 - Dominated by Urban, highly educated, high income; some have weak religious affiliations, secular humanism, strong amongst Methodists, Episcopalians, Low church attendance
 - Orthodox- claim increased Tolerance has led to claims of moral relativism and a decline in moral values
 - Traditional, maintain values, dominated by rural, often less educated (not always), more common amongst fundamental and evangelical churches. High church attendance

Strongly held beliefs leave little room for compromise

Political Ideology- How do we reach the goals of our “political culture”

Political Socialization- The computer determines the Party of your choice is....(Today, Databases are collected of everything you can think of, trying to narrow down how a person will likely vote)

- Correlations (Always Evolving)
 - **Parents*****- Direct and the most substantial
 - **Education**- Mixed. Post Graduate Democrat, College Graduate- Republican, High School Grad- Democrat, Didn't grad HS- Republican
 - **Income**- Becoming More mixed
 - Historically higher incomes were associated with Republican voting
 - **Job type**- Historically, white collar Republican, Blue Collar (union) Democrat, today few Blue Collar jobs and many lower paid white collar jobs.
 - **Geography**- Blue v. Red.. The Coasts v. the South
 - Swing States, the Rust Belt
 - Urban tends to be liberal, rural tends to be conservative (see populist). Suburban is the swing vote
 - **Religion**- Correlation w/Frequency of Church Attendance
 - Historically,
 - Catholics vote Democrat, Protestants vote Republican (cleavage- Abortion issue, other social conservative issues)
 - Jewish people tend to vote Democratic
 - **Race**- Especially High amongst African American (Pres. Bush received less than 10% of African American Vote in the 2000 Election).
 - **Ethnicity**- Hispanics, tend to vote Democratic, except Cubans who vote Republican (see Fla. 2000 Presidential election)

Did you know that if you drive a Mercury there is a overwhelming likelihood that you vote Republican

Left, Right and Somewhere in between (% in 1994)

- *Beliefs surrounding these terms have historically changed.*

Economy

	Favor Govt. Intervention	Against Govt Intervention (laissez-faire)
Favor Govt Intervention on social issues	<p>Populist 24%</p> <p>(Think William Jennings Bryan, want prayer in school and Govt to help the worker), e.g. Reagan Democrats</p>	<p>Pure Conservative 28%</p> <p>(favorable to drug laws, prayer in school etc, little the economy run as it does..).</p>
Against Govt Intervention on social issues	<p>Pure Liberal 17%</p> <p>(Social safety net, free speech, no religion in school, right to choose. Govt is necessary to intervene in the economy to provide equality of Opportunity-ie affirmative action)</p>	<p>Libertarian 21%</p> <p>(Govt. only to ensure safety, ie. Police, Firefighters, Military, No Drug laws, Privatize education and other governmental institutions, Few, if any business regulations)</p>

Social:Govt. intervention moral issues and police power

Conservatism

- Economically- Government should not interfere in the economy.
- Socially- Government should interfere to ensure morality, crime prevention.
- Historically popular amongst older, Midwest, White financially better off

Populism

- Economics-
 - Favors Govt. Intervention to ensure equal opportunity, Break Monopolies
- Social Conservative
 - Favors Govt. Intervention on Social Issues
 - Favor Prayer in School
 - Strong Police Action
- Historically, popular in Midwest, Farming communities, Union supporters

Liberalism

- Economic Intervention
 - Govt. Should interfere to ensure a proper working capitalist economy (eg. Breaking monopoly's), ensure equal opportunity (affirmative action), progressive tax
- Social Freedom
 - Govt. should interfere to ensure rights...eg. Advance Civil Rights (see Progressives), Criminal Defendant Rights, stay out of Moral
 - Favor secularism
- Popular amongst well educated, urban, young, common in northeast and west

Libertarianism

- Economics- Little to no intervention in the economy
 - Govt. is solely for protection, fire, police and military.
Little to know govt. intervention outside of those areas
- Social- Little to no intervention on social issues, except to expand rights
 - Few, if any limits on personal freedom
 - No drug laws, No prostitution laws
- Most popular amongst well educated

Who Participates and Why?

- Americans- The Electorate- Voting Age who are eligible to Vote.
 - Lots of Elections
 - The bigger the “office” up for election the bigger the turnout
 - Turnout in America is LOWWWWW- Last Presidential Election- 50 yr record- 60% voted
 - High Percentage of Americans are not registered
 - The overall voting age (18+ citizen) pop 2008 -206 million citizens-> 146 million, 71% registered
 - NOTE: Due to high incarceration rates since the 70s as well as other factors, a higher % of Americans are ineligible to vote than in the past, therefore the % of Americans who vote may be higher
- 90% registered voters, voted in 2008



Who does and doesn't vote

- Older people Vote- Highest %
 - Elderly programs- 3rd rail of politics
- Younger people often don't vote- Lowest %
- Higher Income vote
- Better Educated vote
- Race: Whites vote in highest %, Hispanics lowest
- Religion: Jews vote in highest %
 - Religious involvement correlates w/high % voting
- Professionals Vote highest %
- No Correlation- trust/distrust govt and voting
- Would Elections be different if more voted? Doubtful

Bring out the Vote and Get Fraud, Harden the Rules and exclude

- Jackson Democrats- Increased Voter Participation- Growing Populism
 - By 1860 only one state (S. Carolina) did not select their Electoral Votes by popular vote
- Late 19th Century- Record Turnout (sometimes higher than the population, unless you include the cemeteries)
 - High % Voter Fraud- Not a secret ballot
 - Political Parties Strong- Strong Patronage- Political Machines, (Boss Tweed)
 - Fewer People could vote (Blacks, Women, Young)
- Remedy- Proposed by Progressives
 - Australian Ballot- Secret Ballot
 - Increased Residency Requirements, Citizenship, Literacy
 - Pendleton Civil Service Act (1883) limited patronage

20th Century attempts to increase voter turnout

- Courts- Unconstitutional
 - Literacy Tests and Grandfather Clause
 - Poll Taxes
 - White Primary
 - Long Residency requirements
- Voter Rights Act of 1965 (Civil Rights Act 1957, 1960)
 - Federal Govt. Intervenes, supervises Election where minorities vote in % disparate with their population
- Motor Voter Law 1993
 - Make Registration easier
- 2002 Voter Reform Act
 - Simplify Ballots
- Constitutional Amendment- Women and 18-21 yr olds
- State laws increased permissiveness on mail ballots

Volunteers of America

- Who gets involved?
 - Voting Specialists
 - Campaigners- clearly id w/a political party, get involved
 - Communalists- Get involved in part for the social aspect- not particularly partisan
 - Parochial Participants- Don't Vote but like to Whine
 - Activists- Guess What?...they get involved, tend to be better educated and financially better off (11%)

Table 8.5: How Citizens Participate

Table 8.5 How Citizens Participate

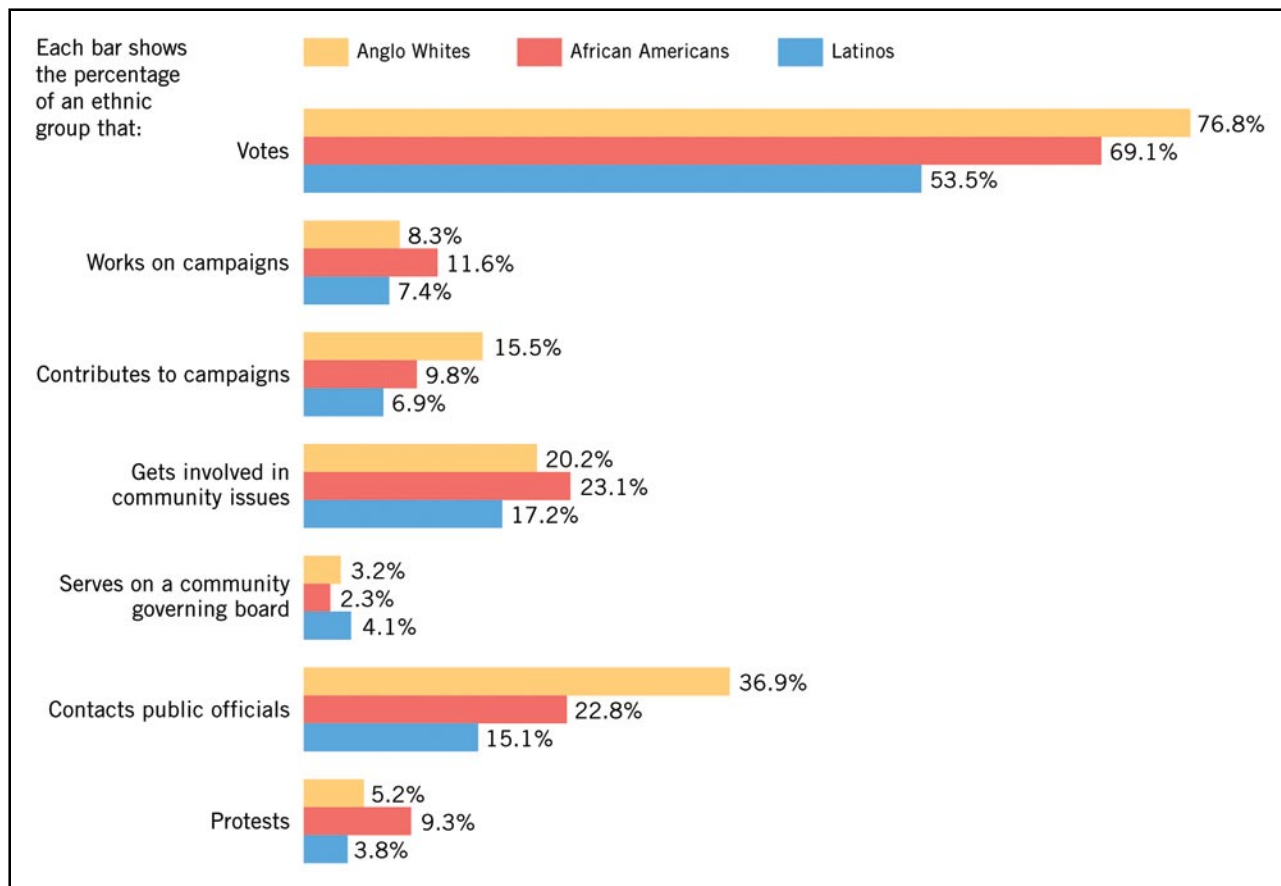
Specific Activity	Percentage Engaging in Fourteen Acts of Participation, 1967 and 1987		
	1967	1987	Absolute Change
Voting			
Regularly vote in presidential elections	66%	58%	-8%
Always vote in local elections	47	35	-12
Campaigning			
Persuade others how to vote	28	32	+4
Actively work for party or candidate	26	27	+1
Attend political meetings or rallies	19	19	0
Contribute money to a party or candidate	13	23	+10
Participate in a political club	8	4	-4
Contacting Government			
Contact local officials: issue-based	14	24	+10
Contact state or national officials: issue-based	11	22	+11
Contact local officials: particularized	7	10	+3
Contact state or national officials: particularized	6	7	+1
Taking Action in the Community			
Work with others on a local problem	30	34	+4
Actively participate in community problem-solving organization	31	34	+3
Form group to help solve local problem	14	17	+3

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Predictors of Participation

- Those with schooling or political information are more likely to vote
- Church-goers vote more, because church involvement develops the skills associated with political participation
- Men and women vote at the same rate (recently women a little higher-could be associated w/schooling)

Figure 8.5: Electoral/Nonelectoral Political Participation Among Anglo Whites, African Americans, Latinos



Political Parties

- 2 party system in US
 - Causes
 - Historical
 - Generally Elections are based on **Plurality** not Majority, so little need for coalitions to form
 - Electoral System and President

3rd Parties

- Only one long lasting influential 3rd Party
 - Republican Party (1854) combined Northern Whigs with Free Soil Party, Know Nothings, Abolition Party
 - Otherwise 3rd Parties have been either short in duration or inconsequential
 - **Short Duration may have an impact on election**
 - **Economic Protest Parties-** Populist, American Reform Party, Issue taken up by Major parties
 - **Faction: Splits within the Party**, Bull Moose Party, Republican Party, Progressive Party (1948), State's Rights Party (1948). Party reunifies, some go to other party
 - **Inconsequential**
 - **Ideological Parties-** Socialist, Libertarian (may have some consequences),
 - **Single Issue**, Right to Life Party, Green Party (recently a broader platform), Abolition Party, Free Soil Party. Often the issue either disappears or other parties take it on.

Nominating For Office

- Steps
 - Getting Signatures- Getting on the Ballot
 - Getting the Nomination-If Party Contest
 - Primaries
 - Closed (NH)
 - Open (Mi)
 - Blanket (Ca.) Questions about its constitutionality, Voter gets all the potential candidates from both (all) parties, does not have to stick to one party-Republican Governor, Democratic Senator
 - Caucus (Iowa)
 - Convention